1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5) 1938 Pukapukans

[586] 152 831 Other stories, however, indicate that a man might divorce his faithless wife or punish her or her lover physically. The community would agree that he had a certain measure of provocation, even though it might not approve of extreme types of punishment. On the other hand, some stories indicate that a man might be untroubled by a faithless wife and continue to live with her, even though he and all the island knew of her philanderings. The tales do not suggest that either spouse might become jealous of the other for joining in the behavior characteristic of the periods of license. This was socially approved; any jealousy that an individual felt he probably kept to himself. When the husbands plotted to kill Waletiale for seducing their wives, they were apparently more worried by the fact that their wives never came to sleep with them than by the fact that they also slept with Waletiale and his men.

581 836 Molingi discussed the sexual experience of the 33 unmarried women and girls in Pukapuka past the age of puberty, and the likelihood of their marrying. It is difficult to know on what her judgment that certain girls will not marry is based; it is probably, in general, an intuitive feeling that those girls whom she considers promiscuous (*wia eia*) can not attract husbands, because men do not want as their wives women who have had many men. A few women placed in the class of those not likely to marry are weak, sickly, not apt to bear children. For the rest, no reason was forthcoming beyond, perhaps, a certain ill-disposition evident in the girls in question.

Of the 33 women and girls, 14 are still at school or have but recently left school and are aged up to 18 years. Informant was certain that five of these had lovers, two more probably had lovers, and five have probably not yet had intercourse. Of the remaining two girls she had no knowledge. Of these 14 girls it is yet too early to say which will be promiscuous and which not. There are four other unmarried girls of the same age who have children. One of these girls has had only two lovers and will probably marry soon. The remaining three girls informant characterized as being *wia eia*, over-sexed, promiscuous. Two of these she thought will not secure a husband, the third may or may not; the matter is doubtful.

There are five women now well on in the thirties, who class as spinsters, women who have never married and who probably will not marry. They are *wia ina*, disliked by the opposite sex. Of these, four have children; one of these four is rated as promiscuous. The oldest woman without children is said to have been promiscuous in her day. There is a sixth older woman who might be classed as a spinster, but she is the inland imbecile, a deaf-mute.

There remain nine young women of the marrying age. Two of these Molingi classes as *wia eia*, though she thinks that neither of them has had intercourse! One woman who has had a child has had but one or two lovers but will probably never marry. The remaining six girls are all said to be men pursuers. Five of them do not have any children, and of these five, only two are likely to marry. The remaining *wia eia* woman, who has a child, is also not likely to secure a husband.

The promiscuous woman, generally condemned to remain unmarried and to be thought of as an irresponsible trouble-maker, will probably have chil-

1;Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5) 1938 Pukapukans

If a married woman went from her house to sleep with another man and remained with him until daylight, she had committed adultery and belonged henceforth to her lover, for her act, called *puhi tvevae*, was tantamount to divorce. If the woman returned to her husband's house before dawn, her behavior might also be considered adultery; but it was not generally condemned, even though her husband was at liberty to whip her. A woman might obtain her husband's permission to sleep with another man, and no punishment befell her as long as she returned home before daylight. Similarly, if before going off with another woman a man told his wife where he proposed to go, and if he returned before dawn, there was no cause for divorce on grounds of adultery. If the relatives of an erring young wife liked her husband and did not wish him to drive her from his house because of her infidelity, they intimidated her with thrashings until she returned permanently to him. He might be only too glad to have her return and so would not dare to punish her himself. There is no suggestion that payment or recompense was ever exacted by the injured party from the co-respondents in any adultery case. The group of stories (1) in which adultery is the motif illustrate the variety of individual and social reactions. Today the attitude to adultery is confused through the operation of the Cook Islands' Act, under which the resident agent governs the island. This act punishes adultery defined in terms of western concepts. Much of the present-day so-called adultery on Pukapuka is committed by day by married women with single young men. Court punishment for the offense does not necessarily lead to divorce as long as the unfaithful spouse returns to her mate.

DIVORCE

Divorce (*mahu*, to throw away) was easily procured in the native culture on grounds of incompatibility, specifically for adultery, cruelty, or personality conflict. A man might drive his wife from the house, or she might leave of her own accord and return to her relatives. The amount of provocation necessary for divorce depended entirely on the married couple concerned: where one might condone adultery in a spouse, another might consider this cause for divorce. Three married couples were separated during our stay on the atoll; two separations were due to alleged promiscuous behavior of the wife, the third was due to adultery on the part of the husband. Formerly, separations were equivalent to divorce, but today they are only the first steps in a tedious and (to the Pukapukan) expensive process leading to a legal divorce. One informant stated that Pukapuka is an island where women freely leave husbands (*e uesaa mahu tane*) and so initiate divorce. Close analysis of the records suggests that there is large measure of truth in this generalization.

Of 126 marriages of which there is record, 60 have been terminated by divorce or death: 18 of the 60 were ended by divorce; 42 by the death of one mate. Of the 18 marriages broken by divorce, 11 were childless; 7 were fecund. Though the presence of children is no bar to divorce, nevertheless it is established that the greater number of divorces occur among childless couples. Both of these conclusions are well grounded in the patterns of the society. With the extended family and the prevalence of adoption, it is no easy matter to take care of children rendered homeless by the divorce of the parents. With a premium on children to carry on the lineage, there is ground for divorce if the marriage is barren.

1:Beaglehole and Beaglehole E-5 (1934-5) 1938 Pukapukans

DIVORCE OR CELIBACY

582 No rule for the disposition of children of divorced or separated parents can be established from practice. Each situation is dealt with on its merits when it arises. Some informants felt that children should follow the mother as they belonged to her maternal descent group; others insisted that children should remain with the father as they belong to his paternal descent group. The divorce of parents does not alter either the maternal or paternal lineage affiliation of children.

Children of marriages terminated by the death of one mate continue to reside with the surviving parent, whether or not he or she remates. Where circumstances demand, children are shared either by simple residence or adoption among their bilateral kin.

DEATH

MOURNING

764 Parents or other close relatives attend the corpse (*mate*) in the house where death occurred.

They first wash the corpse, then place it on a special pandanus mat (*ejaeja*) made for the deceased when he reached sociological adulthood by his mother or other close female relative, and since kept in the rafters of the house. For some corpses attendants make a sort of tentlike enclosure called *la* by sewing four pandanus mats (*hie*) together. They place the tent on top of the corpse and go under it to dress the corpse in a *mate* mate, if a male—a short pandanus mate only long enough for one turn between the thighs and round the waist, made by the deceased's mother in advance and reserved for this purpose—in a kilt, if female. They place a yaws necklace of pearl shell round the neck and tie a *tiki ai* (string of pearl or other valuable shells) round the waist. They then remove the tent and place the corpse on view. For other corpses the tent is dispensed with and the corpse prepared in the open house. If the individual dies with the mouth open, the mouth is not closed; it is covered nowadays with a black rag to make the face look better and to keep the flies out. The eyes are always closed after death, sometimes before if it is obvious that death is imminent.

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If for any reason it is desired to hold the mourning (*tangi*) elsewhere, the dressed corpse is shifted to a suitable house owned by a relative. A desirable house is a large one to accommodate the crowd of mourners, and cool to refresh the mourners during their long vigil. One corpse that I saw being thus moved to a more appropriate house was rolled in a sheet and carried by the principal male mourners. A crowd of children preceded the corpse and disported themselves, laughing and wrestling. Behind followed two old women, sisters of the deceased, weeping aloud and crying out after the deceased sister.

When the news is spread through the village that there has been a death, the mourners, close and distant relatives of the deceased, go immediately to the house where the corpse is laid out. Wailing continuously, they formerly